

Meeting Minutes
Saline Sustainability Circle
Wednesday September 2, 2009
Liberty School, Saline

1. Call to Order and Introductions

Chairperson Campbell called the meeting to order at 7:15 pm.

Present:

LIAA: Heather Seyfarth

MSU Planning and Zoning Center: Mark Wyckoff, Director

City of Newaygo: Rich Blanchard, City Manager

Washtenaw County Office of Strategic Planning: Brett Lenart

Approximately 20 citizens from the Saline Sustainability Circle region

2. Newaygo Experience

Rich Blanchard reviewed the recent joint planning experience of the Newaygo area:

- Started with dissension four years ago.
- Join by recreation uses.
- Template for growth: leave Townships with 1 mil tax for 50 years plus 50 years.
- Five parks plus Newaygo Recreation Authority (NRA) leases soccer fields, ball fields, and football field.
- Uses Tax Increment Financing Authority (TIFA) funding for base plus donations from foundations, etc.
- Growth Management Committee sets plans through joint planning.
- Growth Management Committee consists of two members representing the City, two members from each township, plus one roaming member. It meets once a month.

3. Density Techniques to Improve Livability

Mark Wyckoff, Director of the MSU Planning and Zoning Center, gave a presentation on regional planning techniques. The presentation slides may be viewed at

http://salinesustainability.org/meetings/2009Meetings/090209_Density_Techniques.pdf.

Comments during the presentation included:

- Frankenmuth effort was led by government officials, not Planning Commissions.
- Frankenmuth Township limited additional dwelling units to ten per year outside the Urban Limit Line.
- The new Frankenmuth plan in 2005 was developed over the course of a year with monthly meetings.
- Recommendation: Plan now while growth is minimal. Of the top 100 cities drawing 24-35 year-olds, only one city is in Michigan: Ann Arbor is #99. Chicago is #1 -- close to Michigan for natives.

Questions:

- How to make it work? Joint plans or a common plan.
- Shared Services? Some services use a single board, others looser cooperation.
- How to improve?

- Governments must be business-friendly -- and show it. (See West Michigan and Lansing.)
 - Requires much time and effort. Must remove false barriers (attitude); must be positive.
 - Consider Ann Arbor? Saline is micro-region of Ann Arbor. Take advantage of the proximity. We can do it. Be proactive.
- Parting thought: Start with a single small project to succeed.

4. Next Meeting

- The September 15 meeting will be held at 7:00 pm in the Police Training Room at the Saline City Hall.

5. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Douglas Veenstra
Secretary

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